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Subject: EAPS Community update, COVID-19 (3 July 2020)
Date: July 3, 2020 at 4:20 PM
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Campus police: 617-253-1212
MIT Medical COVID-19:
Hotline: 617-253-4865
Updates: <https://medical.mit.edu/news/2020/01/2019-novel-coronavirus-updates-1>
MIT COVID-19 updates: <https://covid19.mit.edu>
EAPS/MIT message archive: <https://eapsweb.mit.edu/news/2020/covid-19-eaps-updates>

Thursday 3 July 2020

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To all members of the EAPS Community:

I am sending you a brief note, mostly to wish you a wonderful 4th of July holiday. I hope that you are all able to take a well-deserved break and that today you all had a good start of the long weekend. Although there are many things going on at the department, School, and Institute level, I will keep this message short in observance of the holiday.

First of all, please stay safe! The COVID-19 numbers in MA continue to decrease, but many of you may be in places where this is not the case. Wherever you are, please continue to act responsibly and look after yourselves and those around you.

The past month has been difficult not only for new surges in infections and ensuing uncertainty about MIT's fall plans, but—of course—also for the recognition of ongoing systemic racism in society and the injustice and inequities in many forms and at all levels. While the nation is trying to come to grips with these problems, we also acknowledge the specific problem of under representation of minorities and people of color in the geosciences. These are complex, macro-scale issues, but we owe it to everybody in our community, and the many that will follow, to do what we can to improve the culture and to ensure that EAPS is a welcoming, equitable, and safe place for students, staff, and faculty from all backgrounds.

Letters from Students

In response to the #shutdownSTEM events organized on June 10th our undergraduate and graduate students came together and crafted thoughtful letters and comprehensive and compelling lists of recommendations. These were sent to the entire department, but they are attached to this message in case you missed them. There are also changes happening at the School Level, such as the approval to appoint a DEI Officer in the Dean's Office, and I will inform you about these when more is known.

Faculty Honors

With this writing I also take the opportunity to congratulate Wiki Royden and Kristin Bergmann with [their appointment](#) as Cecil and Ida Green Professor and D. Reid Weedon, Jr. '41 Career Development Professor, respectively, and Professors Kristen Bergmann, Colette Heald, and Kerri Cahoy for being honored for their [commitment to caring in 2020-2021](#). The "Committed to Caring" (C2C) program is administered by MIT's Office of Graduate Education (OGE) and recognizes outstanding mentors and promotes thoughtful, engaged mentorship throughout the Institute.

Building updates

Earth and Environment Pavilion: Last week, Angela and I learned that a \$10M gift toward the Earth and Environment Pavilion has been confirmed. This puts us on the home stretch for completing the fundraising and so much closer to getting the green light in November to move to the next phase (that is, construction) without delay, with anticipated occupancy early in 2023. After formal approval of the *concept design* by President Reif—expected any moment now—the architects move to the *schematic design*, with focus on the interior. Owing to the pandemic the engagement of the larger community has been wanting, but I am in communication with the architects to ensure more community involvement in the next phase of the design. So stay tuned!

Lecture Hall (54-100) naming contest to start 22 June: After a long COVID-19 induced delay, this exciting community activity finally got underway on 23 June. The first round – that is, submission of names – has seen a lot of activity, with over 50 unique names nominated as of (earlier) today. Everybody currently and formerly at EAPS can suggest up to two names, and if you have not yet done so already please be creative and participate in this historic opportunity to name one of the prime spaces in our building and on campus. The first phase closes at midnight on July 6, so just over three full days to go! For details – and for the list of names proposed so far – please check [slack](#) or the [online guidelines](#).

More after the break. For now Happy 4th of July Holiday, and—as always—please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or comments.

Stay safe and well!

Rob
Head. FAPS

11:00, 11:15

Contacts:

Rob van der Hilst, for faculty and general matters

Taylor Perron and Megan Jordan, for matters related to education/teaching

Michael Richard, for all matters related to staff and general building issues

Jen Fentress, for all matters related to communication and online teaching



Mail Attachment



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